Akrura Takes Krsna and Balarama to Mathura

from the Sri Lalita Madhava by Srila Rupa Goswami
Translated by Kusakrata dasa and adapted by Radha Damodar dasa

Vrnda: I heard a great sound like the roaring from the depths of an agitated ocean and so I have quickly come here! Please tell me, what is the source of this horribrillation!

Paurnamasi: Daughter Vrnda, you didn't hear the news?

Vrnda: Noble lady, what is it?

Paurnamasi: Yesterday, peacock-feather-crowned Krsna returned to Vraja village after, with unprecedented strength, killing Kesiasura who had become a mountain of anger when his friend, Aristasura, was killed by Krsna. It was then that noble Akrura, who had been sent by Kamsa, arrived at the palace of Nanda Maharaj!

Tomorrow morning, when the sun rises on the Eastern horizon, the king's messenger will take our Krsna, and His elder Brother, Balarma, to Mathura City, the capital of Kams
a, the enemy of the demigods!

Vrnda: (silent for a moment, then a long sigh) No! If Akrura takes Krsna to Mathura City, then for what reason shall I beautify the new forest grove? For what reason shall I make a bed of flowers or make the fragrant vines blossom always, even after the blossoming season is past?

Paurnamasi: (with anguish) Their lotus eyes filled with tears, the gopis have stayed awake the entire night, crying with long wails. They are frightened with ecstatic love and angry at Akrura. Now that night is over as it had been only a single moment. Alas! Sad is the gopis fate!

Vrnda: (tearfully) Alas! By churning the great ocean of Gokula, the Mandara Mountain of Akrura has extracted the moon of Krsna, and created the kalauta poison of the Vrajavasis' anguished separation from Krsna.

Paurnamasi: Child, let us o to the gopa-king Nanda, (walking, she looks ahead, and then begins to shed tears) Nanda's wife, Yasoda, is so agitated she forgot to offer suitable prayers for her son's safe journey. She is so perplexed that she forgot to prepare a lunch for Him to take on the road. She simply embraces Him again and again, cries, and muddies the dust on His body with the stream of tears from her eyes.

Vrnda: Did the noble lady hear what Saibya said to her friend?

Paurnamasi: What is it, my daughter?

Vnda: She said, "O bewildered girl, I think it is because you are so absorbed in churning yogurt that you do not hear the pathetic wailing of Vraja Village. O my friend, a wicked messenger of the king is now hurrying Krsna to Mathura City."

Paurnamasi: Child, because you were agitated by Saibya you could not hear Syama's lament.

Vrnda: What you say is true. Tell me what Syama said.

Paurnamasi: She said, "The sun has now risen and Gandini-devi's son, Akrura, stands on the chariot happily reciting prayers for a swift journey. Also, when the horses begin to gallop, they will break only the earth with their hooves, and not you, O my heart."

Vrnda: How does Bhadra lament? Let us listen.

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: O bird of my life-breath, even though in your presence your beloved Krsna hastily climbed aboard the chariot, still you refuse to abandon this slain body that has become your nest!

Paurnamasi: (glancing to the left) My child, Candravali fashioned a garland for Krsna to wear at noontime. Padma is now speaking to her some words that pierce her like a javelin. Let us listen.

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: Even though Krsna, who carries the Sudarsana cakra, and who is very affectionate to His associates, has already climbed onto the chariot, you are still intent on stringing this flower garland. O fickle, deaf Candravali, has the deep, sustained, tumultuous wailing of the gopis not entered your ears?!

Paurnamasi: (anguished) Hearing from her friend the unpleasant news of Lord Krsna's departure for Mathura, Candravali, alas, became overwhelmed. The half-strung flower garland slipped from her hand, and she at once fainted as if dead!

Vrnda: Look! Placing unconscious Candravali in front of the chariot, Padma cries bitterly!

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: O girl who has lost all hope, try to understand for a moment. Look a little from the corner of your eye. Merciless Akrura, the son of Gandini, is quickly bringing the hose.

Paurnamasi: Child, because I cannot see Radha, I am worried!

Vrnda: (looking to the right) Alas! Look! Visakha and the other gopis cannot bear to either tell or not tell Radha the news of Krsna's departure for Mathura City. They are completely stunned. They stand together, ear to ear, as if they have lost all sense!

Paurnamasi: (unhappy) O Radha, when the blinking of Your eyes momentarily interrupted Your seeing Krsna, You would glorify the fish who were so fortunate that they did not have to bother with thus blinking! O Radha, whose heart is wounded by love, what will happen to You now that fate is taking Krsna to Mathura City?!

Vrnda: The tumultuous sound of the gopis' crying has made restless-eyed Radha run from the path as a frightened doe!

Paurnamasi: Alas! Agitated with transcendental madness, Radha now babbles eloquent nonsense, running from one language to another!
A Voice From Behind the Scenes: Now that I see Vraja's prince, Krsna, standing on the chariot with His brother and uncle, why do I stumble and fall to the ground!? Why does the earth move like this? Why are the kadamba trees dancing!?

Paurnamasi: What is Lalita saying? Let us listen:

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: Krsna is now beginning on the path around Govardhana Hill. O my dear friend, Radha, please do not lament!

Paurnamasi: Listen to what the girl is saying!

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: Now I know everything! My friend, what will you cleverly hide from me? Wretched girl, stop! I will not be unhappy when Krsna is gone. Why does this shameless breathing again and again move in my throat!?

Vrnda: O noble lady, Visakha is about to say something:

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: After Krsna kills Kamsa, He will again meet you in the middle of the night. My friend, You are the most patient and tolerant of all the gopis. Please, do not be upset.

Paurnamasi: Listen to this eloquent gopi, Radha's, words:

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: Don't console Me. Hopeless girl, your mouth is dry from praising Me. Far away, the wheel of Krsna's chariot again and again breaks the belly of the hard earth!

Paurnamasi: Ah! Her heart, afraid of lotus-eyed Krsna's journey, Radha, whose eyes are like cakora birds, has become restless!

Vrnda: One moment she cries bitterly, the next moment She rolls about on the ground before the chariot. The next moment, Her tear-filled eyes gaze on Krsna's face. The next moment, She places a blade of grass between Her teeth and bows down before Lord Balarama and begs Him not to leave Vrndavana! Is there any person Radha will not throw into the ocean of intense compassion for her?

Paurnamasi: (tearfully) Although in the presence of Her dear gopi friends, She would not even for a moment glance at Krsna with even the slightest fragrance of tears gliding to Her lips. Now, without any embarrassment, even before Her superiors, She stares at Krsna with tear-filled eyes! Radha makes my heart wilt with pain!
As Krsna rides on the chariot, how many thick tears appear in Her eyes like drops of honey on a lotus flower!?

Vrnda: Noble lady, the gopis' life-breath will now follow their master Krsna.

Paurnamasi: Look! Here comes someone bearing a message from Krsna! (She takes the message.)
The message says, "O beautiful, pious gopis - some anguished nights you may see before you again attain My auspicious company."
In this way, Krsna, the killer of Aghasura, with ropes of hope, tightly bound the deer of the lotus-eyed gopis' life-breath.

Vrnda: (with anguish) Now that lotus-eyed Krsna has left Vraja to go to Mathura City, the bumble-bee will no longer drink honey. The peacocks will not decorate the forest with their lively dances. And the cakora birds will refuse to keep company with their wives.

Paurnamasi: (following the tracks of the chariot-wheels, she laments) Radha's pathetic cries of grief plunge the entire world in an islandless ocean of intense pain! These marks in the all-tolerant earth that appear to have been made by the wheels of the moving chariot have in reality been made from far away by Radha's cries!

Vrnda: Alas! The pain of separation from Mukunda has unsettled Radha’s mind. Sometimes She runs about and sometimes She stands still like a painted picture. Sometimes She laughs and sometimes She weeps bitterly. Sometimes She is very talkative and sometimes she is silent.

A Voice From Behind the Scenes: My dear friend, where is Krsna, who is like the moon rising from the ocean of Maharaj Nanda's dynasty? Where is Krsna, His head decorated with a peacock-feather? Where is He? Where is

Krsna whose flute produces such a deep sound? O where is Krsna, whose bodily luster is like the luster of the Indranila jewel? Where is Krsna, who is expert in rasa dancing? O, where is He Who can save My life? Kindly tell Me where to find Krsna, the treasure of My life and best of My friends!? Feeling separation from Him, I hereby condemn Providence, the shaper of My destiny!

Paurnamasi: Alas! This body is now overwhelmed with pity! I must go at once!

Vrnda: Noble lady, I would like to bring Mukhara here.
(They both exit)